

REMEMBER • CRAIG • BOYD

DEADLY CLASS™

DIE FOR ME PART TWO



1988



#18

The Story So Far...

When homeless orphan San Franciscan teen Marcus Lopez was asked to join Kings Dominion Atelier of the Deadly Arts, a shadowy school specializing in training the next generation of the world's deadliest assassins, he expected trouble wouldn't be far behind. But he had no idea.

Unlike the majority of the alumni, Marcus is not a legacy pledge. As it turns out, these unaffiliated kids cynically referred to as "Rats", have themselves become the final exam for their more privileged classmates. Anyone who kills a Rat passes. Failure is not an option.

As the carnage spills out into the hallways, Marcus and fellow-rat/occasional lover Petra scramble to get to safety, as they are beset on all sides by bloodthirsty classmates, eager to get a passing grade.

Their chances aren't good, as Marcus' former-roommate-turned-ruthless-strategist Shabnam is using the chaos to rid himself of all competitors at the school, using guile and cunning to send his classmates out to kill and die for him.

One of Shabnam's targets is Willie, Marcus' former best friend, who was found out to have lied about every single kill his rep was built on. Willie's former gang is out to settle the score, but Willie is backed by his girlfriend Saya, one of the deadliest kids in all the school.

Love, Hate, Blood and Betrayal. It's Freshman Finals at Kings Dominion, and the body count is rising...

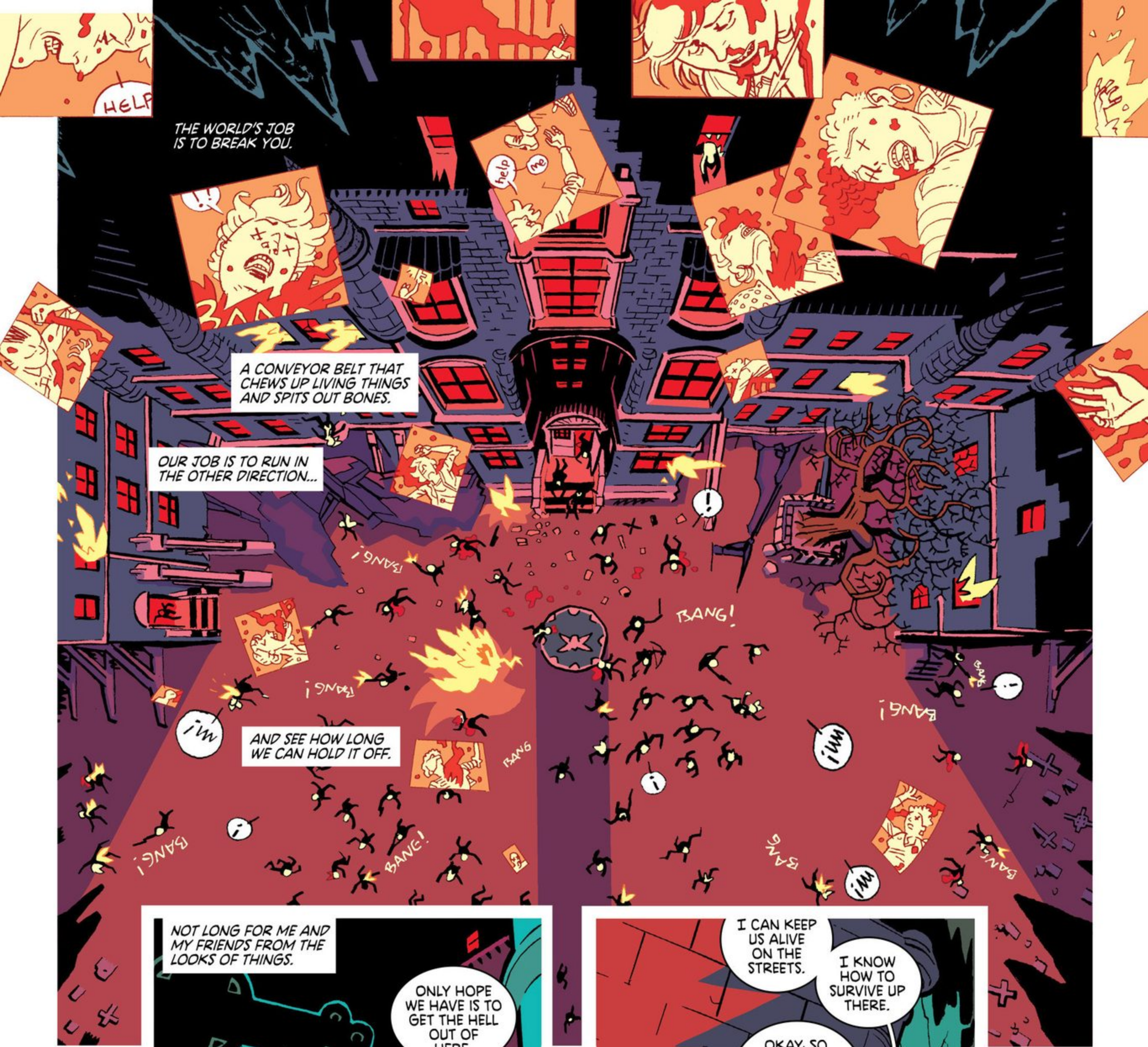
DEADLY CLASS created by Rick Remender & Wes Craig

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THE WORLD'S JOB
IS TO BREAK YOU.

A CONVEYOR BELT THAT
CHEWS UP LIVING THINGS
AND SPITS OUT BONES.

OUR JOB IS TO RUN IN
THE OTHER DIRECTION...

AND SEE HOW LONG
WE CAN HOLD IT OFF.

NOT LONG FOR ME AND
MY FRIENDS FROM THE
LOOKS OF THINGS.

ONLY HOPE
WE HAVE IS TO
GET THE HELL
OUT OF HERE.

AND GO
WHERE?

I CAN KEEP
US ALIVE
ON THE
STREETS.

I KNOW
HOW TO
SURVIVE UP
THERE.

OKAY, SO
YOU'RE LIKE
THE **HOBOTED**
ONCE WE'RE
TOPSIDE---

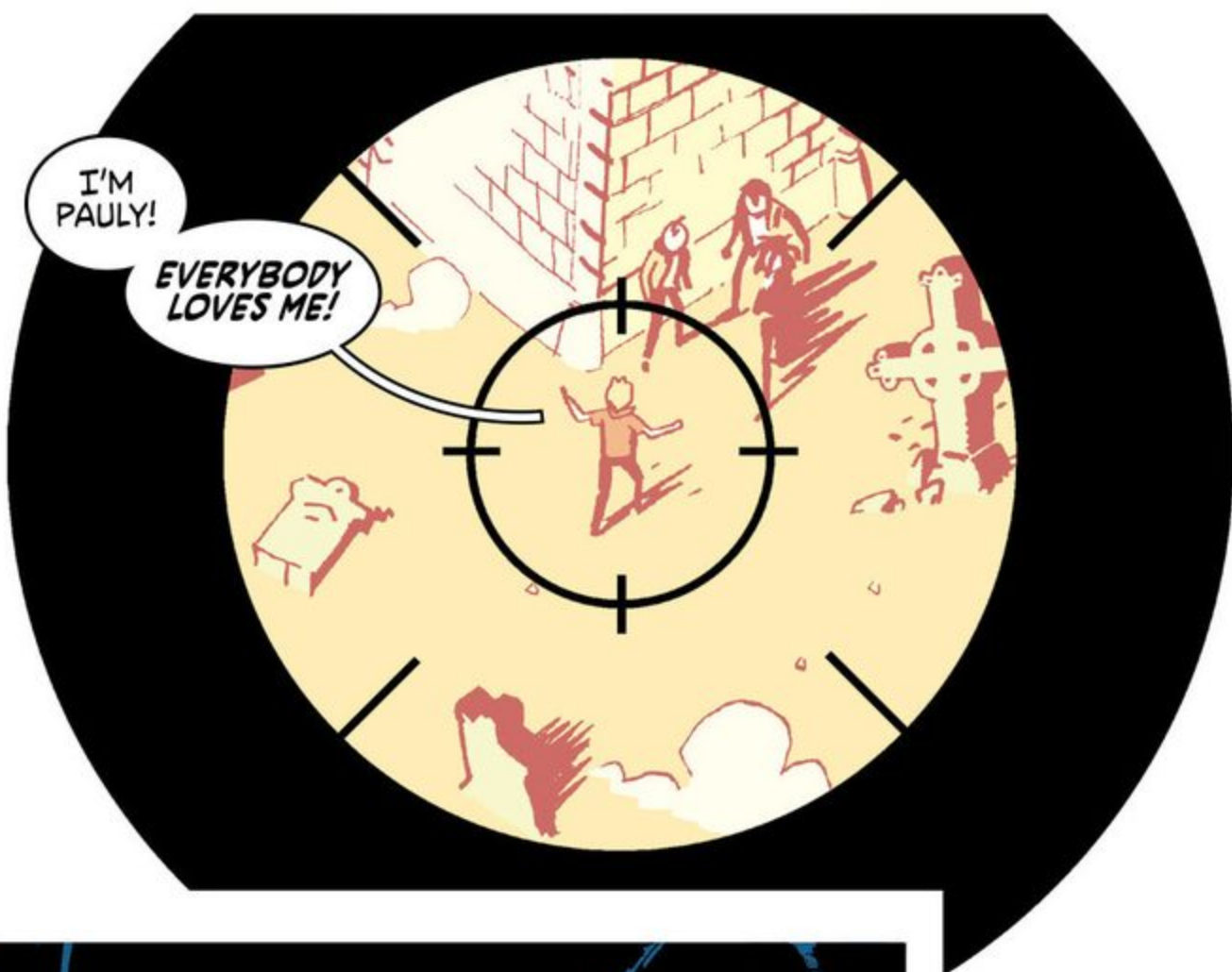


--BUT
HOW ARE WE
GETTING
PAST THE
GUARDS?



MARCUS!
PETRA!

WAIT
UP!





NO.



NOT PAULY.



AND THE OTHERS DO NOT DESERVE CLEAN DEATH.

LET THEM GET OUT...



"...VIKTOR WILL HUNT THEM LIKE ANIMALS IN WILD."

LOOK, "PAULY" YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN. SO, FUCK OFF, OKAY?

YOU ARE **FOR SURE** GOING TO DIE AND MAYBE GET US ALL KILLED.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE TREATING ME LIKE **THIS...**



DUDE, EVERY TIME I HELP SOMEONE WHEN THEY'RE DOWN, EVERY TIME I GET SOMEONE'S BACK--

WHEN **I'M** DOWN THEY SNEAK AWAY OR STAB ME.

NO ONE IS GOING TO THINK TWICE ABOUT KILLING ME-- **SO FUCK EVERYONE.**



YOU'RE RIGHT-- THEY ALL HATE YOU.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT?

MOST OF THEM ARE **TERRIBLE** PEOPLE.



ASSHOLES WHO CAME TO A SCHOOL TO LEARN TO **HURT** PEOPLE.

ALL THOSE OTHER KIDS-- UNLIKE US--THEY ALL **WANT** TO BE HERE.

THEY **CHOOSE** TO STAY--



FUCK-- THEY'RE PASSIONATELY **COMPETITIVE** ABOUT EARNING HIGH MARKS.

THESE ARE THE KIND OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD KILL EACH OTHER TO GET AHEAD IN THE WORLD--



--AND YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT **THEY** THINK OF **YOU?**

DUDE, WHEN IT COMES TO THIS GROUP, ODD MAN OUT IS THE **RIGHT** PLACE TO BE.



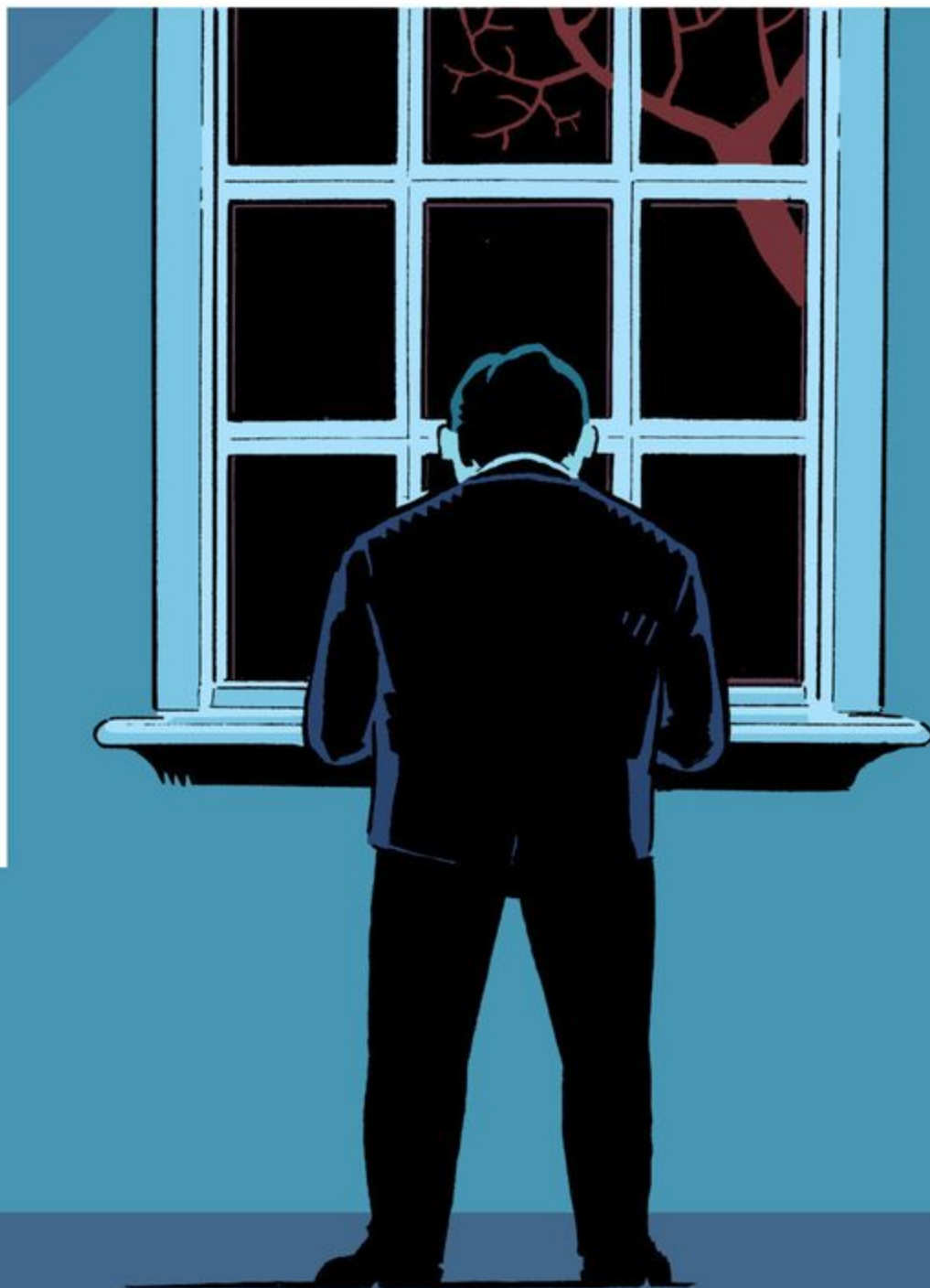
LET'S HELP RED SHIRT HERE--

PAULY.

LET'S HELP GET PAULY OUT.

THAT'S HOW WE WIN THIS-- NOT JUST BY SURVIVING...

...BY NOT
BECOMING
CUNTS IN THE
PROCESS.



SHABNAM SURVEYS HIS CAMPUS,
ONCE PERFECTLY MANICURED,
ITS GROUNDS NOW LITTERED WITH
THE BODIES OF HIS ENEMIES.

SOME HAD BEEN RATS, BUT MOST WERE
SIMPLY IN HIS WAY. THOSE STILL ALIVE
WERE SO BECAUSE THEY FELL IN LINE
BEHIND HIM, KISSED HIS RING.

THREE SERVINGS OF CHICKEN TENDERS,
STEAK FRIES, AND RANCH DRESSING
EXPANDED HIS BELLY. THE SUGAR IN THE
CHOCOLATE CRULLER EVENED OUT THE
CARBOHYDRATES' SEDATING EFFECT. THIS
IS WHEN HE IS HAPPIEST,
MOST ABLE TO PLOT.

THE CAMPAIGN OF WHISPERS
HAD WORKED. HE'D TURNED THEM
ALL AGAINST ONE ANOTHER.

HE WASN'T THE KIND OF PERSON WHO TOOK THE HIGH ROAD. HIS SAD
LIFE WAS THEIR FAULT, AND HE WAS GOING TO SHOW THEM ALL.

HE RULED WITH FEAR. HE'D TAKEN THE SCHOOL'S LESSONS
TO HEART: BEING ETHICAL GETS YOU KILLED.

THE PERKS FOR JOINING HIS CLAN WERE MANY, WHILE
REFUSING HIM OR LEAVING YOU'D BE DEMONIZED, AND
WITHOUT HIS PROTECTION, END UP DEAD.

NEARLY EVERYONE STILL BREATHING WAS WITH HIM
NOW. WITH ONE NOTABLE EXCEPTION--THE REPORTS
CAME BACK THAT MARCUS' BODY WASN'T AMONG
THOSE COLLECTED.

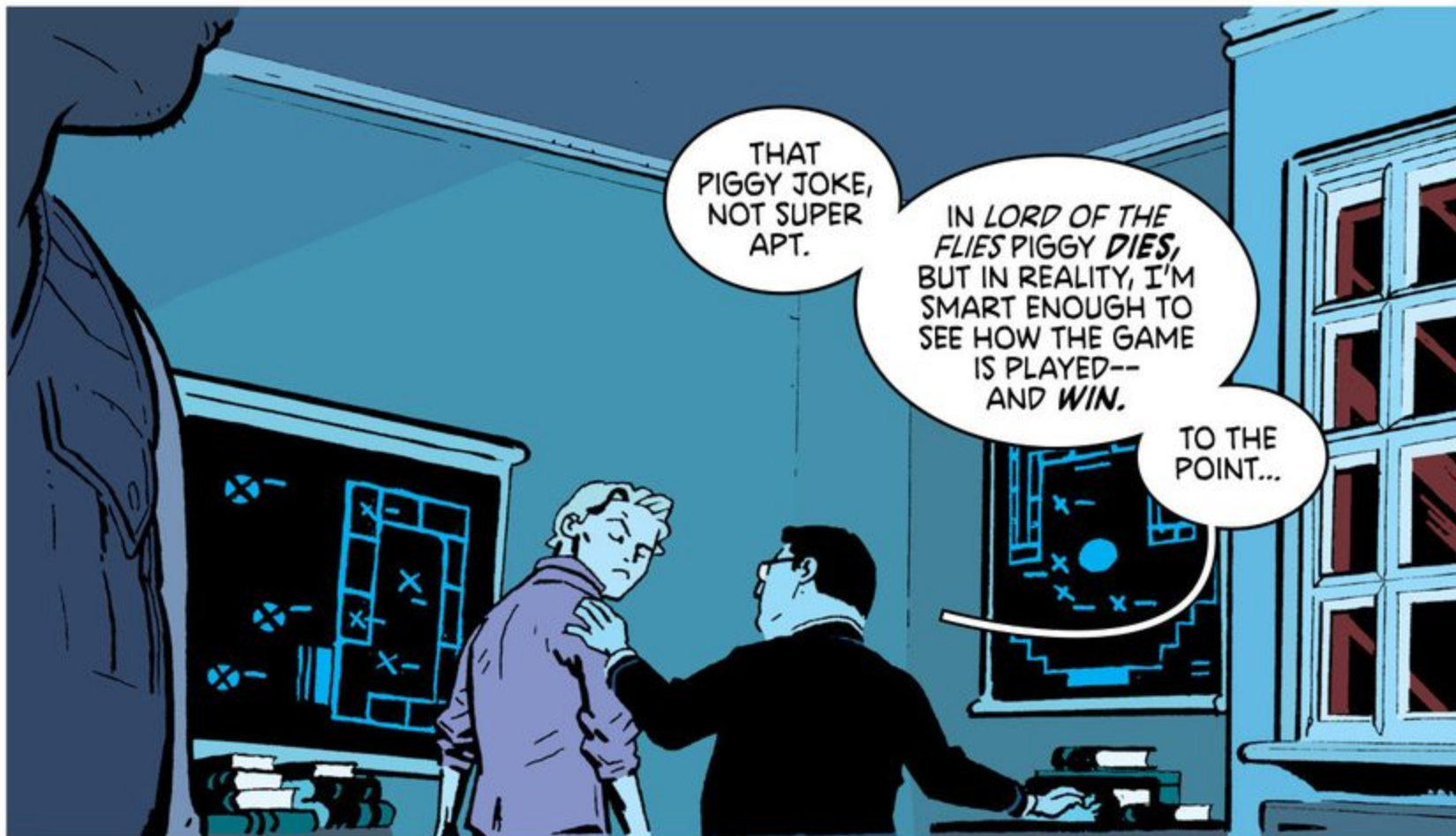
MARCUS WHO HADN'T INVITED HIM TO THE PARTIES.

MARCUS WHO HAD DEFILED HIS FLOWER.

MARCUS WAS STILL ALIVE.

YOUR
IDIOTS TOLD
ME YOU
WANTED TO
TALK,
PIGGY?











DEADLY CLASSES

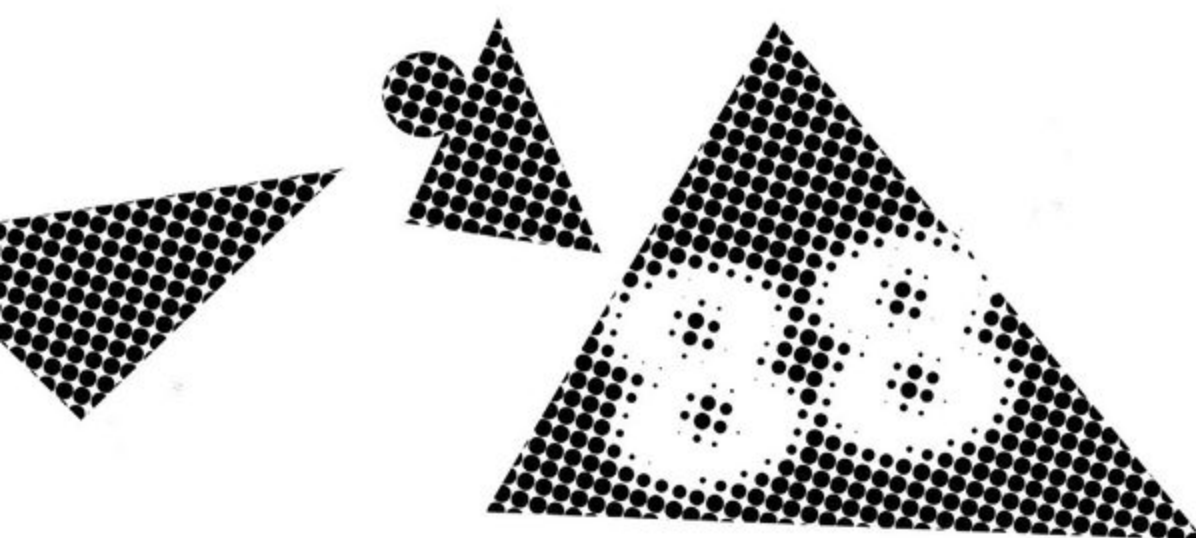
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writer • co-creators

WES CRAIG
artist

JORDAN BOYD
colorist

RUS WOOTON
letterer

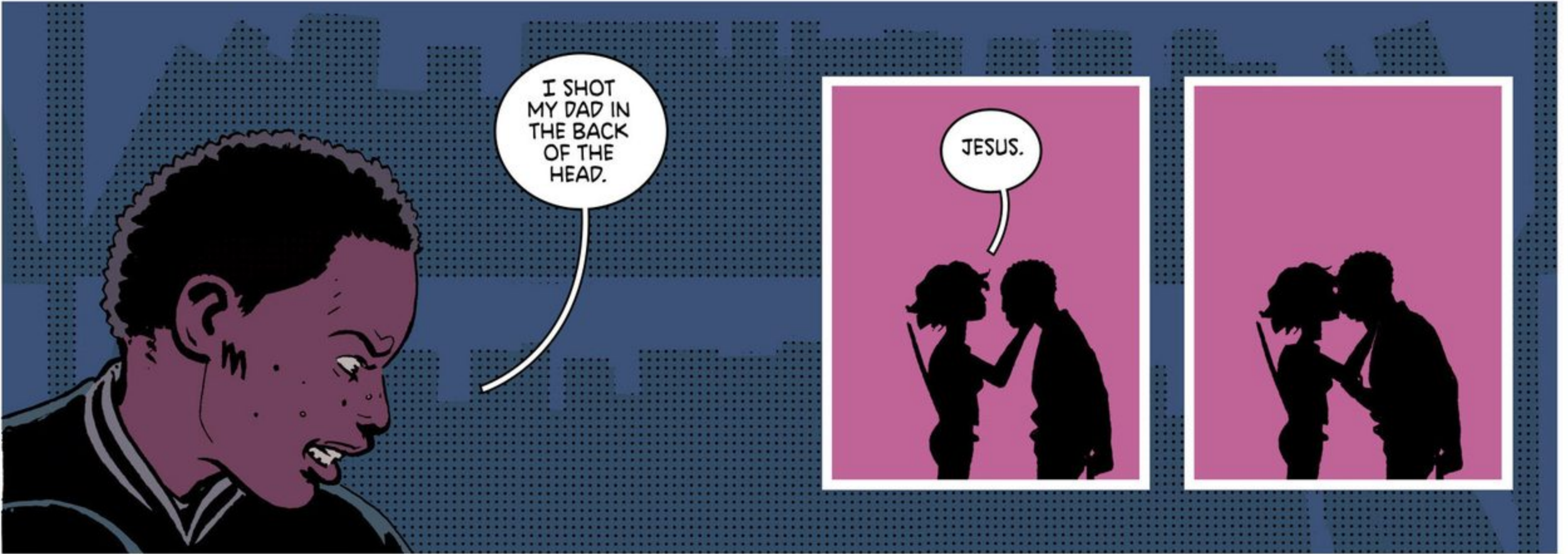
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WILLIE,
HIDIN'
BEHIND HIS
BITCH.

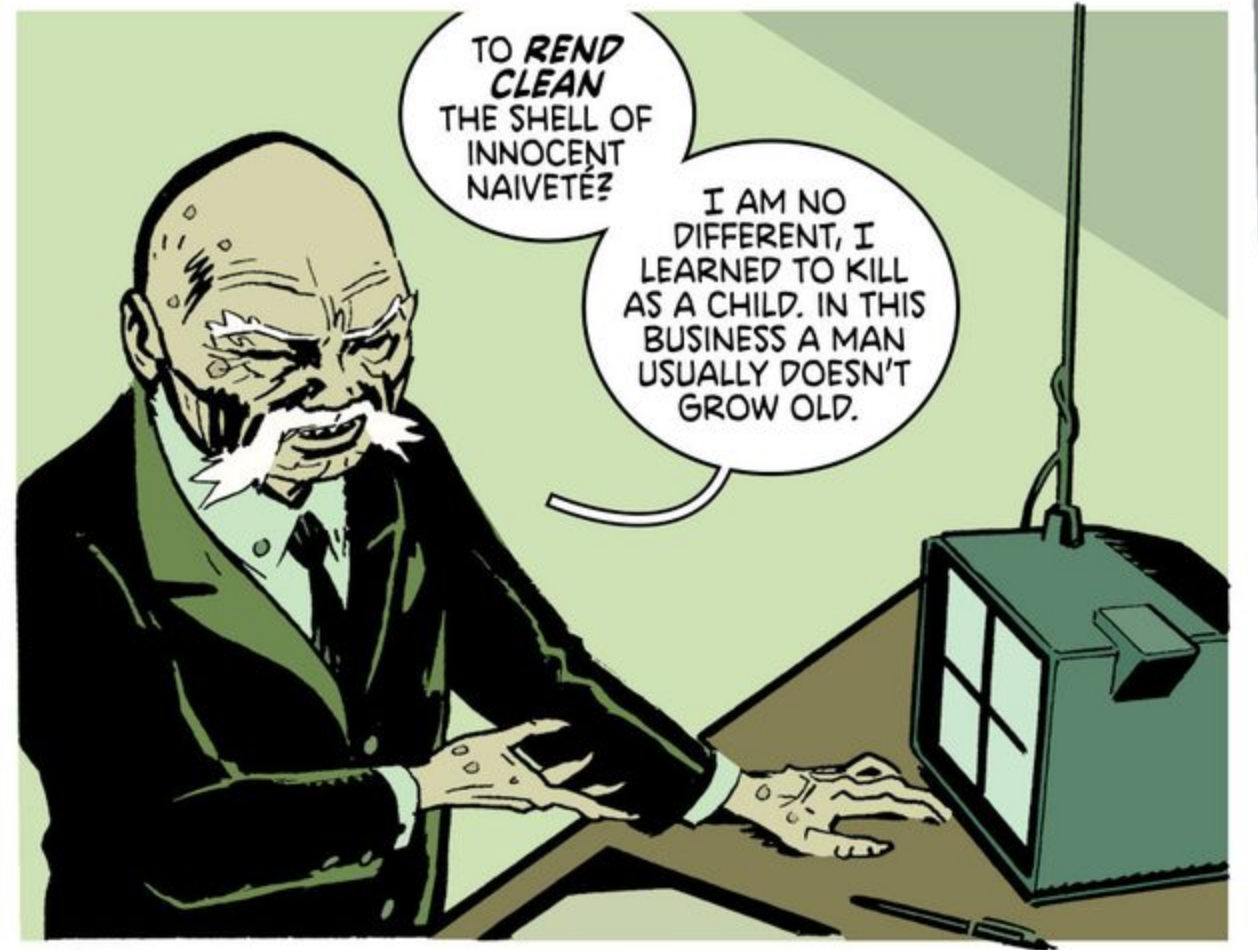


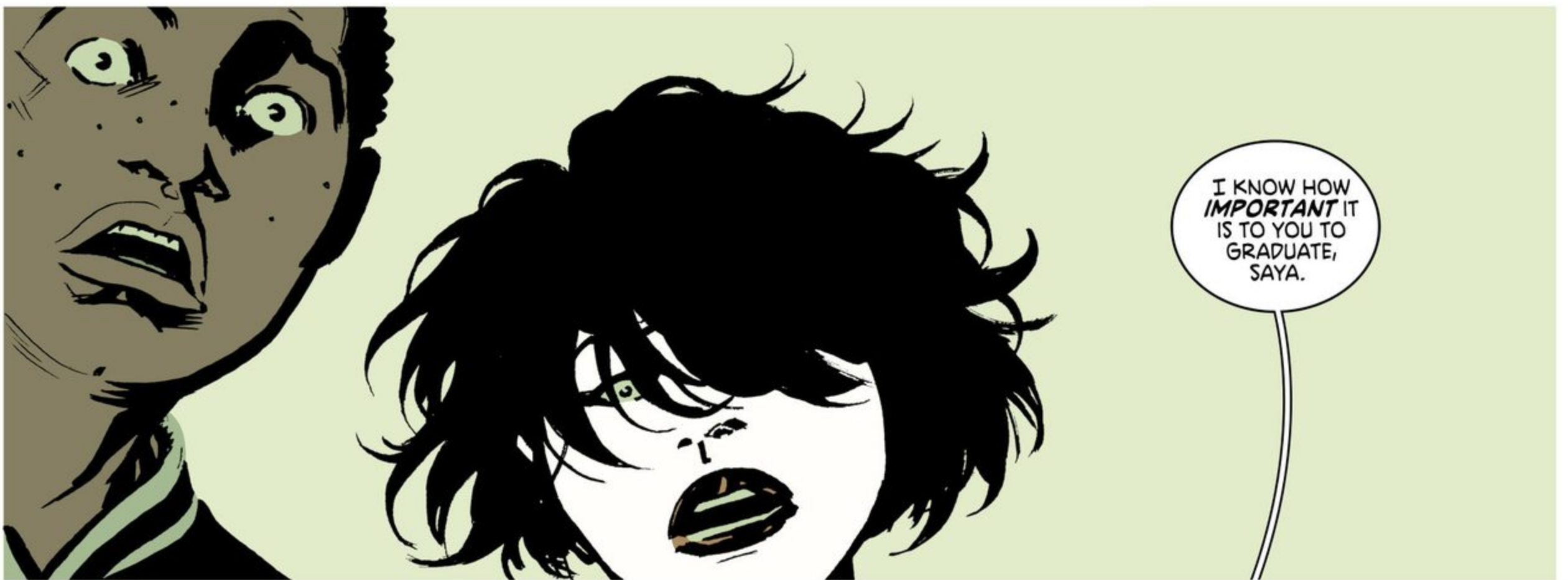
SOME
HOS JUST
GOT SHIT
TASTE IN
MEN.

WEEZZ











I KNOW
HOW MUCH
YOU EACH
LOVE YOUR
FAMILIES.



HOPE FOR
THEIR SAKES
THAT THESE RATS
DO NOT EXPOSE
MY SCHOOL.



GO.

FINISH
YOUR
ASSIGNMENT,
CHILDREN.



AND PRAY
YOU DO NOT
LIVE TO SEE WHAT
THIS OLD MAN
IS *CAPABLE*
OF.



TO BE CONTINUED.

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

RR - When I was writing this script I was incredibly bummed out by some shitty people doing shitty things. It made getting the script done on time difficult. Until I realized that I should channel some of the wonderful nuance of those shitty people into some of the shitty people in the book. Whenever I channel real world ugliness and hypocrisy into my writing it's pretty cathartic, and usually I'm proud of the result. In terms of building up our villains it's proven invaluable. And the villains are rising, so we've really only just begun that process. If you like bad guys doing bad stuff you've come to the right place.

Hey Rick, Wes & Sebastain,

I'm from Iran if you know where it is and I hope you do because it'll be super awkward!!

I just want to say I f*ing love DEADLY CLASS and the team behind it. Art is super cool and the story...I mean...woooow... It's new but kinda feel familiar and I really like to know what were your inspiration about whole thing.

I just have some confession, in our country, Iran, comic books in paper doesn't exist at all or very rare or so hard to find and so so costly then people like (believe me there are so many comic lovers and comic addicts in Iran) must download digital versions and because our country policy we can't legally buy them and we should pirate it to fulfill our love to comics and I must say we are so so sorry for this but we don't have any other options and please forgive all of us and I wish someday comic lovers in Iran can buy legally.

We love you all, and from long distance we support you intellectually, and I say sorry for download illegally.

Vahid

RR - Of all the places I imagined we might have a readership; Iran was not on the list. Wes, the entire team, and I are incredibly excited that the book is being read around the world and being discovered in places where it's not even available in print... and probably not smiled upon by the powers that be. In the case of you and your friends in Iran, until the Supreme Leader gives his blessing for you to purchase and read what you want, we give you our blessing to download the books and enjoy them guilt-free.

To Rick and the DEADLY CLASS crew,

Some fifteen years ago, I found Black Flag's "Damaged" album by mistake at Sam Goody or whatever bullshit overpriced music store used to exist in the mall back when people bought CDs. I had never heard Black Flag before, but it was mistakenly filed in Black Sabbath's bin and it was cheap, so I took a chance. By the time the album was halfway over, I had the lyrics booklet spread open in front of me and I was singing along with the choruses ("TV Party tonight!"), knowing in my heart that I'd found my new favorite band. I felt the same way when I finished the first issue of DEADLY CLASS.

I truly feel special that I'm here to witness the emergence of Image Comics as the gateway to the best

stories being told via sequential art right now, and DEADLY CLASS is one of the books that made me happy to spring for monthly issues rather than being a trade-waiter like I was for years. Assassin stories are a dime a dozen, but putting one against the sprawling, spray-painted, sun-baked backdrop of the Los Angeles punk scene in the 1980's, when Reaganomics was in full effect and video games were 25 cents a pop, all of it permeated with the kind of brutally honest adolescent angst that we spend the rest of our lives trying to overcome - it's enough to make me want to consider getting my third Black Flag tattoo as well as any future issues of DC that I can find. I hope this story keeps going for years and years and that you have as much fun making it as I do reading it.

Keep up the good work!
Nick B.

RR - I used to love those moments in the record store. When I lived in Arizona there was a place called Zia, and in San Francisco Amoeba, where you could rifle through thousands of used albums. I used to go religiously, every month I spent at least one full Saturday rifling through albums, talking to clerks, and trading in failed experiments for new albums, I spent countless hours cultivating my collection. Nothing can touch the feeling of getting home and discovering that new band, the one you didn't buy just because somebody told you to, or because it met the requirements of the scene you are trying to plug yourself into, it was simply an album that looked interesting

and you'd bought it. As you played it for the first time it was like a magic box that you'd discovered. It felt like those bands were really *your* bands. It was far more personal. It didn't matter if they were big or small you'd made taken a chance on some one's music and it connected with you, there was no greater reward. Now the only music I buy a download digital-ly, I don't go to the record shop anymore, I find bands via recommendations based on other bands I like and occasionally from friends, and it's not at all the same. Nothing can compare with opening up the lyrics and singing along with a bunch of humans someplace else who are feeling the same as you and observing the things you observe.

Mr. Remender you are a genius, waiting for issue 17 was really hard, and you rewarded that waiting with that astonishing chapter, which in my personal opinion is by far one of the best in the series thus far. You have opened a door to gigantic repercussions within in the series, and I cannot tell you how excited I am for whatever comes next.

DEADLY CLASS is my favorite comic book right now, I also buy *Black Science*, *Low*, and now *Tokyo Ghost*, but DEADLY CLASS is number one and has been for the past year and a half, so reading in your note on the Dead Letter Office, that you're preparing a more profound tone for the series and especially the characters was really awesome, I'm dying right now to read #18, January 20 seems so far, but incredible things are worth the wait. I'll keep reading the series until

you hit the end, let's hope we don't see it for many, many years.

So there's nothing else more to say, just thank you and thank to Wes Craig for your excellent work.

Luis Orozco
Guadalajara, Mexico

RR - I'm glad you like the opening chapter of the new story. The last story was all about slice of life and character development, which I love and will get back to eventually, but right now, were back in the action phase of the series. Thank you for supporting the books and taking the time to write in.

Dear DEADLY CLASS Team,

This one is for Rick. Just want to say I've become a huge fan of your Image Titles, DEADLY CLASS being my favorite, even above Tokyo Ghost even though I've been a long time Sean Murphy Fan. DEADLY CLASS has just been an emotional roller coaster.

I hope you don't mind me getting a bit personal, I just want to let you know how hard reading DEADLY CLASS hit home for me. Volume 3 hit me especially hard as I was officially diagnosed with depression two years ago after a series of unfortunate events that led to some dark places for me. I'm just kind of glad that you were able to write a character going through severe depression in a realistic manner. You didn't treat it like a writing gimmick. I never felt a harder knot in my stomach in the last 2 years than reading Volume 3 of DEADLY CLASS because I was able to relate to Marcus on an emotional level, even though I didn't like the

feeling. Your writing touched me and I mean that sincerely with all my heart.

Thank you for writing a character going through this specific type of struggle with such respect and professionalism. I hope things get better for Marcus soon, and to anyone else reading this fan letter. Dealing with depression is a constant struggle, but with the proper help it does get easier, and eventually it does get better.

Thank You, Rick.

Sincerely,
Ricky Castro.

RR - Writing a character going through severe depression in a realistic manner is easier than you'd think. I suffer from a chemical depression that normally grinds me up pretty good and on top of that I've got some difficult life stuff to juggle these days adding to the environmental side. Digging through my old journals in channeling that youthful angst is oddly cathartic. It opens my eyes to how the more things change the more they stay the same. Last week I read a journal entry from 22 years ago that I literally could have written yesterday. That always serves as an interesting reminder that there is an aspect of this that is just inherent to my personality and how I process life among the human beings. I'm glad that the book connects with you and feels authentic. I'm glad there are people like you out there reading comic books.

Things get worse next month.

Hope to see you then!

- *Rick*

TRANSMISSIONS FROM A BASEMENT

'Tis the holiday season as I write this, and while I find the merriment part a bit unnatural, I really like the idea of good will toward man. But since that's not likely to happen on any meaningful scale, ever, how about we wallow in the other tenet of the holidays: *appreciation*.

Now, I could sit here in my troglodyte's basement writing out all the tons of shit in my life that I'm grateful for, my wife and kids, my friends and family, my amazing collaborators and publisher, but that would bore the nog right out of you, so how about we skip it get to what really matters: *you*.

I appreciate you. We all do. Not for any of your charitable contributions this year, or how many times you visited Nana in the home, or your SAT score or the big win you had in fantasy football (even participating in this dingbat jive loses you a few points with Santa), we appreciate you for coming to us with money in exchange for entertainment. Crass, right? Give me a second, because underneath is the beating heart of a levitating reindeer.

Paying cash money is a sacred trust that we don't take lightly. Money is hard to get. People have to do all kinds of terrible business to get it. We can't make comics without it. The fact you're here with us, and paid admission not once, but monthly, that's a Christmas miracle of jumbo magic. I take it to mean you connect with what we're doing and that you're entertained by our capering. That is what we're all grateful for. Sincerely. We couldn't do it otherwise.

Very few people in my generation of comic creators had any overnight success or, really, any audience for many years. When I started self-publishing my first comics in 1997 the industry was busted. The big boom of the early 90s had come and gone, and the speculators left and so did the readers because the comics, for the most part, were bad. We started doing this in a broken and dying industry where there were few to no creator-owned success stories. But my definition of success wasn't just to have readers; it was to make personal comics, which we owned, in multiple genres with no constraints. To find a wider audience than just the loyal superhero crew. We didn't get into it to get rich, but we did need to make a living.

After years of making creator-owned books with no one reading them, I was pretty broken down mentally. I threw up my hands and joined the big circus, the tent with all the colorful characters and the Big Top and the spotlight--the place with the crowd out front. It was good for my writing, I learned a ton, but that big circus is a story for another time.

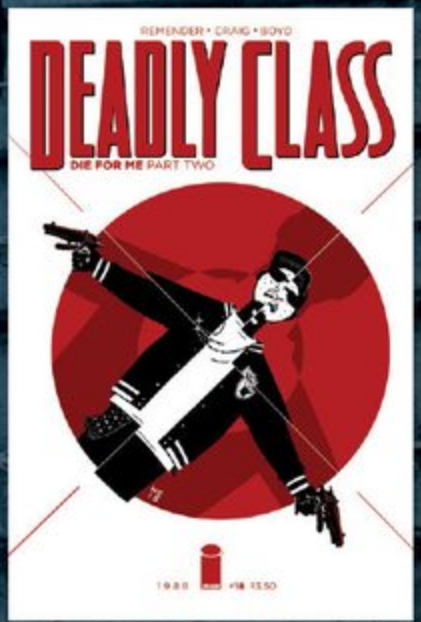
After all these years, you finally came looking for new kinds of comics. You made it possible for us to make our own freak tent, producing the kinds of books we got into comics to make, with the people we want to make them with, exactly how we want to make them. You made our dreams come true. We appreciate you and we'll continue to work hard to make sure we give you our best in every book we put out.

As a gift for you we had Frenchman super genius Bengal do up a big print with the characters from LOW, TOKYO GHOST, FEAR AGENT, STRANGE GIRL, DEADLY CLASS, and BLACK SCIENCE. We'll eventually get these prints out for sale, but for now you can enjoy its majesty on the following spread.

Have a great 2016!
- Rick



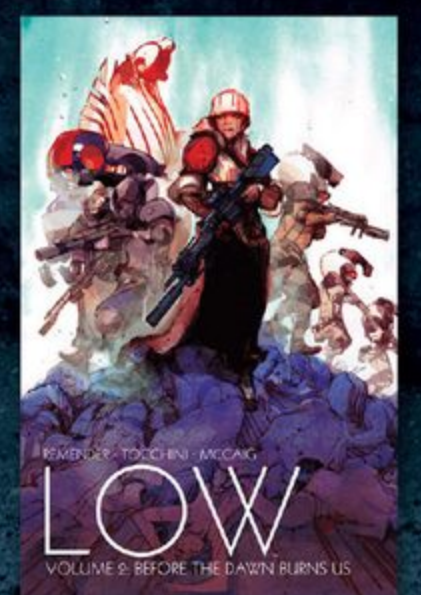
BLACK SCIENCE
ISSUE #19



DEADLY CLASS
ISSUE #18



TOKYO GHOST
ISSUE #5



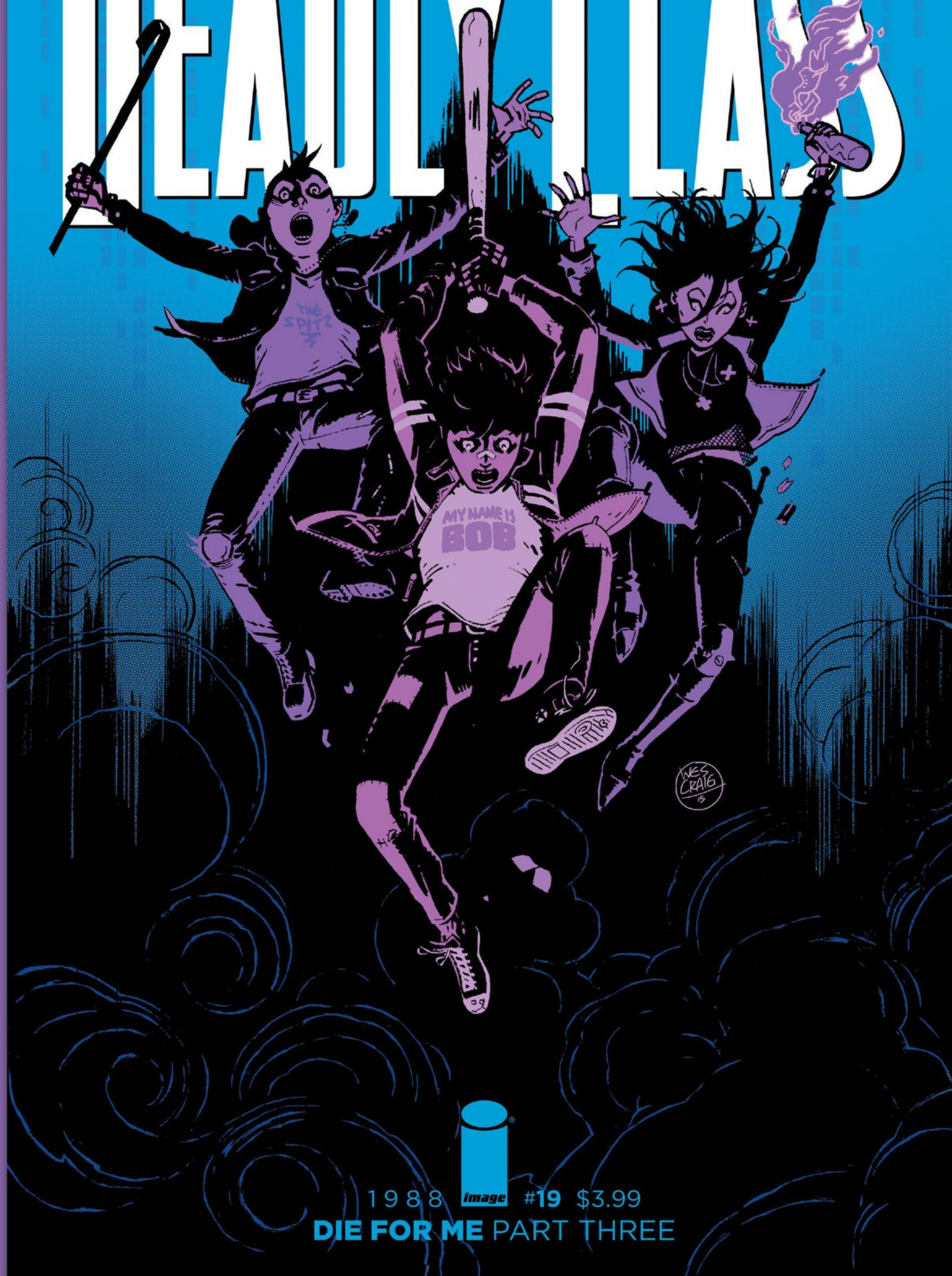
LOW
VOLUME 2

OUT
NOW

NEXT ISSUE

REMENDER • CRAIG • BOYD

DEADLY CLASS



WES
CRAIG
15



1988 **image** #19 \$3.99
DIE FOR ME PART THREE

HAPPY 2016!



BLACK SCIENCE™ Rick Remender & Mateo Scalera, DEADLY CLASS™ Remender & Wes Craig, FEAR AGENT™ Remender & Tony Moore,
LOW™ Remender & Greg Tocchini, STRANGE GIRL™ Remender & Eric Nguyen, TOKYO GHOST™ Remender & Sean Murphy

Art by BENGAL



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RATED **M** / MATURE